

A Proclamation conteyning her Maiesties pleasure, how those shalbe dealt withall, which haue falsly slandered her Maiesties proceedings and her Ministers, by spreading vile and odious Libels, and brutes to stirre discontentment among her people : containing also a sharpe commandement to all Iustices of Peace and other principall persons in the Countreys, to see Ingrossers of Corne and Graine duely punished.



THE Queenes most excellent Maiesty hauing alwayes had an especiall care and prouidence to preuent all maner of lacke of such things as may serue for the food of her Subjects, perceiuing well how bitter a thing the scarcity of victuall is to the poozer sort of her people (of whom her Maiesty is no lesse tender then of the richest, seeing Almighty God doth expect from her an account of all those ouer whom he hath chosen her to be the Ruler here on earth) her Maiesty hath not onely recommended precisely to her Councell and other principall Ministers that all maner of Graine might be kept within the Realme, but hath likewise directed them to punish such Ingrossers and foystallers of Corne as by their greedinesse labour still to rache things by to vnreasonable prices: forasmuch as her Maiesty hath seene diuers letters written from most of the Iustices of the Peace and other officers in seuerall Countiees, wherein they certifie to her High Treasurer of England that the people in the Countreys did greatly desire (according to the purpose of former Statutes made and prouided in that behalfe) that there might be some licence granted for the vent of Corne, the lacke whereof did keepe the same at so low a price, as not onely the Farmers were discouraged from Tillage, and disabled to pay their rents, but growen vnable to set the pooze labouringmen on worke, for want of meanes to raise money, her Maiesty was contented by the aduice of her Councell to command the Lord High Treasurer of England (in respect of so vniuersall desire expessed by most of the principall Gentlemen of the Shires, that some quantity might be issued) to grant licence for transportation of some reasonable portion into the Territories of such Princes and States as are in amity with her Maiesty, with this further direction, That as there should appeare any augmentation of prices, so the same should be timely restrained. And now perceiuing that some malicious and wicked spirits that do lie in wait to sow sedition in the hearts of her Subjects, haue not only raised brutes both in the Countrey and within her City of London especially, That by immoderate transportation of Graine great dearth is made amongst her people, but haue falsely taxed the said L. Treasurer of England with malicious accusations contained in leud libels, where he himselfe (knowing wel her Maiesties inward care to preuent any such inconuenience) after he began to doubt that the great raines falling about Christmas last might haue hindred the season of the Corn for the yere to come, did presently of himselfe (according to her Maiesties trust) send letters in January last to restraine any further transportation: whereunto diuers Iustices of the Peace in diuers Countiees did againe retorne new instances that the former licences might be continued: without the which they protested the Countrey should be vndone. Whereupon her Maiesty hauing duely considered how much it toucheth her in honour, to haue such wicked persons punished and suppressed as haue thus leudly sought to depaue her actions, hath thought good first to notify by this her Declaration, That albeit she is duly informed that there is no such lacke of Corne in the Realme, nor that the whole quantity licenced to be transported out of the whole Realme hath amounted to any such extraordinary quantity as is bruted, whereof a great part remaines yet vniissued, but that this shew of lacke hath onely appeared in some places by practise of some vnconscionable Farmers, who (hoping that an apprehension of an vnseasonable yere to come, would raise the prices) went about to hoord by all their Corne, and by Badgers and such other Cornmongers, haue either kept the same from the Markets, or els haue extorted what price they listed, when they had ingrossed it. And therefore although the sayd Lord Treasurer of England for preuention heereof hath made stay a good while since of all maner of transportation whatsoever (euen of the quantities formerly gran-

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ted) though her Maieſty is not ignorant (howſoever ſuch ſlanders will repine both at all earthly power and at Almighty God himſelfe) that diuers Countreys in her Realme, both haue in ſozmer times, & might with good blage now, beare the transportation of much moze Cozne then hath bene now licenced to paſſe out of all her Maieſties Realme of England by any of her Maieſties licences this yere : for the redreſſe of which abuſes whereby the price of Grain is ſo much raiſed, although her Maieſtie hath by the meanes of her Councell cauſed certaine good Orders in that behalfe to be ſet forth and publiſhed in Print, and the ſame to be ſent vnto the Juſtices of the Peace in the ſeuerrall Counties, together with earneſt Letters from her ſayd Councell for due obſeruation thereof : neuertheleſſe her Highneſſe doth hereby expreſſy pronounce, That all thoſe that ſhall preſume to publiſh any ſuch ſlanderous brutes by word or writing maliciously, ſhall be held in caſe of perſons that are authours of Sedition, and ſo guilty of the heauy paines due for the ſame. And for that purpoſe doth not onely hereby command all Maiors, Juſtices of Peace, Bailiffs, Conſtables, Headboroughs, and all other her publike officers, to be very diligent to finde out ſuch vnnatural ſlanders which do ingroſſe theſe kinds of Grain, to the prejudice of her Maieſties poore people, but to be very carefull and vigilant to finde out and apprehend all ſuch leud and diſobedient perſons that ſhall offend or haue offended by ſuch railing ſpeech or writing tending to ſuch purpoſe : That they may be proceeded with after, as thoſe who labour to diſturbe the quiet of her Maieſties happy gouernment : and alſo to make knowne, That all that ſhall heare any ſuch ſpeeches, and not reueale them to the next Officer, ſhall be held partaker of thoſe hainous offences. And whereas her Maieſty is giuen to vnderſtand that the like vntrue reports, and ſlanderous ſpeeches haue bene bruted abroad of new Licences for transportation of Leather out of the Realme, which leud reports notoriously knowne to be falſe, are likewiſe giuen out by ſeditious and troubleſome ſpirits, to moue her ſubjects to diſquiet and diſcontentment, Her Maieſty doth in like maner ſtraightly command the like order to be taken for the inquiry, apprehenſion, and puniſhment of the authours and maintainers of this ſlanderous ſpeech and rumour, concerning the transportation of Leather, as is befoze expreſſed and preſcribed, touching thoſe that haue raiſed the malicious and ſlanderous rumour of the transportation of Grain. Given at her Maieſties Manour of Greenwich the ſecond of June 1600, in the two and fortieth yere of her Highneſſe reigne.

God ſaue the Queene.

Imprinted at London by Robert Barker,
Printer to the Queenes moſt excellent
Maieſtie.

ANNO 1600.